

Appln No. 09/880,714

Amdt date June 3, 2005

Reply to Office action of December 3, 2004

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-3 and 5-23 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1, 17, 19, 20 and 22 have been amended. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims, and drawings. No new matter has been added. This Amendment is being filed with a Request for Continued Examination. Entry of the above amendments and allowance of claims 1-3 and 5-23 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 9-10, 14, 17-19, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,335,992 B1) in view of Marmur (U.S. Patent No. 6,466,886 B1). Claims 2-3 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Sahasrabuddhe et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0159114 A1). Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Levine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,668,106 B1). Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Grann (U.S. Patent No. 6,396,978 B1). Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Zadikian et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,631,134 B1). Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Gersbach et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,371,766). Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al., Marmur, and Grann, and further in view of

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Sahasrabuddhe et al. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bala et al. and Marmur, and further in view of Okano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,449,074 B1). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim 1 has been amended to include, inter alia, the feature that the electrical switch is capable of "simultaneously switching electrical channel signals having different data-protocols with different data-rates received at respective ports of the electrical switch." Amended claim 1 further includes, inter alia, the feature that the regeneration unit comprises a "3R regeneration element and a bypass connection for the 3R regeneration element for 2R regeneration."

We respectfully submit that none of the prior art documents cited, either taken alone or in combination, teach or make obvious a network node as claimed in amended claim 1.

More particular, U.S. Patent No. 6,335,992 (Bala) discloses different electrical switch fabrics in which each individual electrical switch has a single, constant data rate. In the described embodiment of Bala, the data-rates of all switches in the switch fabric are the same. We refer the Examiner to, for example, column 12, line 26, and Table 2 of Bala. Furthermore, the only relevant modification suggested in Bala is to have different data rates for some or all of the switches (column 12, lines 26, 27). Clearly, therefore, it would not have been obvious for a person skilled in the art to arrive at a network node comprising an electrical switch being capable of "simultaneously switching electrical channel signals having different data-protocols with different data-rates received at

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respective ports of the electrical switch," as claimed in amended claim 1.

Referring to U.S. Patent No. 6,466,886 (Marmur), we respectfully submit that there is no disclosure or suggestion of a regeneration unit comprising a 3R regeneration element and a bypass connection for the 3R regeneration element for 2R regeneration. Therefore, it would not have been obvious for a person skilled in the art to arrive at a network node comprising a regeneration unit comprising a 3R regeneration element and a bypass connection for the 3R regeneration element for 2R regeneration, as claimed in amended claim 1. Accordingly claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Amended independent claims 17, 19, 20, and 22 each comprise features corresponding to the features discussed above with reference to amended claim 1, which made claim 1 allowable. Accordingly, claims 17, 19, 20, and 22 are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-3, 5-16, 18, 21, and 23 are also in condition for allowance because they depend on an allowable base claim, and for the additional limitations that they contain.

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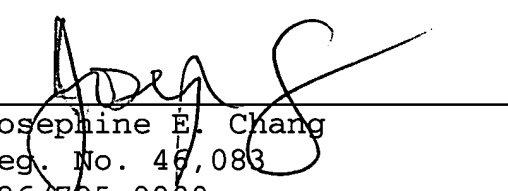
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In view of the above amendments and remarks, reexamination, reconsideration, and allowance of claims 1-3 and 5-23 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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